

A New Face for DMS

Blake Dalton takes over as principal at middle school

By JUSTIN GRAEBER

Coming from Phoenix, Arizona via Kansas, new Duxbury Middle School Principal Blake Dalton was used to a flat landscape rather than the rolling hills of the South Shore.

"My first thought was I was trapped in a tunnel of trees everywhere I went," he said.

After a few months in Duxbury, however, Dalton is growing accustomed to his new home.

Dalton was introduced as the new DMS principal at a School Committee meeting earlier this summer. Since then, he has been working with Superintendent of Schools Susan Skeiber and Assistant Superintendent Edwin Walsh to get his school ready for the return of students Sept. 2.

Dalton spent the last 20 years working for the Phoenix School District. For the past 11 years, he had been the assistant principal and athletic director at the Centennial Middle School in the Kyrene School District.

Dalton's wife is from Marshfield, so he was always interested in moving to the East Coast.

"The desire to move to the South Shore was there," he said.

As he began to research potential jobs and towns in Massachusetts, Duxbury stood out in areas like graduation rate and MCAS performance.

"Duxbury has an outstanding reputation," he said. "I was more than excited, to say the least, when it started become a reality ... Duxbury's a very sought after community."

He officially started his position on July 1 and has been meeting with staff.

"For me it's nothing new,



Blake Dalton is entering his first year as Duxbury Middle School principal. He comes to Duxbury from Phoenix, Arizona where he was a school counselor and assistant principal.

THE DALTON FILE

Name: Blake Dalton

Age: 44

Born: Salina, Kansas

Now lives in: Marshfield

Education: Kansas State University, Arizona State University, University of Phoenix.

Experience: 20 years in the Phoenix school system. Taught fourth and sixth grade before becoming a middle school counselor and assistant principal.

Family: Wife, Laura, sons Cole, 4, and Anderson, 19 months.

ton expects to deal with in his change from an assistant principal to a building principal is more day-to-day involvement with curriculum. He said his prior job dealt mostly with student conduct issues.

Middle school students in particular are at a complex age, he said.

"The middle school age is a real unique balance between the social stuff and the academic piece," he said. "It's walking a fine line between helping them become young adults while reminding ourselves that they're still children."

He believes that the Duxbury Middle School has a great staff and can really help students in their development as students and as people.

"If you get the right people, and I understand I do, they can have such a great impact."

school is school. But at the same time I'm excited to meet the staff. I've heard nothing but the most wonderful things about what a dedicated staff they are," he said. "I'm excited to see the kids come through the door, and to start putting faces to names."

One of the changes Dal-